

Sustainability Corner

Climate Friendly Parks Program: A Servicewide Update

PFMD Update • Volume 3, Issue 5



Left: Summer on Mount LeConte, which at an elevation of 6,593 feet is only the third highest peak in the Great Smoky Mountains, offers a unmatched view, Great Smoky Mountains National Park (Source: NPS Photo)

Right: Originally named Chopawamsic Recreation Area, Prince William Forest Park protects the largest piedmont forest in the National Park Service and the largest greenspace in the Washington, DC region (Source: NPS Photo)

The Climate Friendly Parks (CFP) Program – a voluntary program providing parks with learning opportunities, helpful tools and many resources focused on understanding climate change and sustainability – has been quite active over the past few months!

In April, the Sustainable Operations & Climate Change (SOCC) branch – with the help of several park and region representatives – facilitated three CFP workshops in the Midwest (MWR) and Intermountain (IMR) Regions. The first two workshops were held in the MWR at two locations – the South Dakota Game Fish & Parks-operated Outdoor Campus West in Rapid City, SD, and the Blue Bell Lodge in Custer State Park, Custer, SD respectively. Participants included staff from Agate Fossil Beds NM (AGFO), Badlands NP (BADL), Devils Tower NM (DETO), Fort Laramie NHS (FOLA), Jewel Cave NM (JECA), Minuteman Missile (MIMI), Mount Rushmore NM (MORU), Scotts Bluff NM (SCBL) and Wind Cave NP (WICA) as well the MWR I&M network, and several regions and visiting parks, like Cuyahoga Valley NP (CUYA) and Apostle Islands NS (APIS). The final workshop, hosted by San Antonio Mission NHP (SAAN), was and held at Slaterry Hall near San Juan Mission in San Antonio, TX, and included nearly all park staff.

Workshop highlights include countless informative presentations and activities facilitated by guest speakers from both regions, numerous parks, USGS, and GSA; several university representatives from Oglala Lakota College, USD Oral History Center, University of Texas and SFA State University (TX); and local residents and representatives including ranchers, waste managers and energy management companies.

In addition to the recent workshops and action planning sessions, the CFP Program would like to welcome two new member parks and congratulate them on their accomplishments and dedication as they continue moving the National Park Service in a sustainable direction!

Great Smoky Mountains National Park

Great Smoky Mountains National Park (GRSM) in the Southeast Region (SER) has committed to reducing their greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from park operations to 16% below 2006 levels by 2020. Actions to accomplish this goal include:

- Identify and implementing climate change mitigation actions including utilizing alternative energy sources and improving building structures and envelopes
- Increasing climate change education and outreach via incorporating climate-friendly information into interpretive programming and creating demonstration projects and exhibits conveying park sustainability messages to visitors, among other actions

Prince William Forest Park

Prince William Forest Park (PRWI) in the National Capital Region (NCR) has committed to increase climate change education and outreach as well as several greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction strategies, including reducing GHG emissions from several sources including:

- Park energy use by 12% below 2008 levels by 2016
- Transportation by 50% below 2008 levels by 2016
- Solid waste by 21% below 2008 levels by 2016

The CFP Program would like to congratulate all parks – both current and potential CFP members – on your efforts and success! For more information about the CFP program, please visit the Climate Friendly Parks website (www.nps.gov/climatefriendlyparks)